

*OHIO STATE BALLADS: History through Folksongs [Anne Grimes, with Dulcimer] Edited by Kenneth S. Goldstein/ Folkways Records and Service Corporation, NYC/ USA/ No. F H 5217. \$5.95. With a 16-page brochure giving texts of ballads and background material.*

# OHIO STATE

Reviewed by

*WILLIAM T. UTTER Professor of History at Denison University, Granville, the descendant of generations of Ohioans, who has written extensively in the field of Ohio history.*

**H**ERE IS A COLLECTION of twenty folk-songs which will appeal to every Ohioan, whether his interest is in music, historical tradition, or folk-poetry. In an introduction to the excellent accompanying brochure one reads that Anne Grimes has devoted "considerable time and energy" to the task of preserving Ohio's musical tradition. This is an understatement, for the energy is that of a well-trained and exceptionally intelligent musician and much of the time—thousands of hours of it—was spent in pursuit of Ohioans who were carrying unrecorded ballads around in their heads. The success of her enthusiastic sleuthing has been phenomenal, in fact almost unbelievable. The task of selecting a score of songs from a collection numbering in the hundreds must have been difficult indeed, for how does one proceed to winnow when there is so much wheat?

One cannot really be objective in eval-

uating a collection of folk-songs such as this. The musically inclined may notice how the "gap-scaled" melodies are sung by Mrs. Grimes with almost intuitive ease; how the dulcimer becomes a versatile accompanying instrument if it is resonant and well-played. The folk-lorist will appreciate the authoritative notes which she has written for her songs. Those whose special enthusiasm is for the history of Ohio's earliest years will be thrilled to have on one record *The Battle of Point Pleasant*, *Logan's Lament*, and *St. Clair's Defeat*. Those seeking additional reasons for being proud of Ohio will be glad for the identification of *Old Dan Tucker* and *Up on the Housetops* with our tradition. But best of all is the thought that by means of this record, and others which we hope may be in prospect, the musical tradition of our region may be implanted in the fertile minds of school children.

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Orchestras in Ohio, especially the major ones, have not been slow to present opera programs as part of their offerings. In the 1956-57 season, the American Symphony Orchestra League reports, among the Ohio orchestras so doing were those in Springfield, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Toledo. In the current season more are expected to follow suit.

# BALLADS

*ANNE LAYLIN GRIMES (Mrs. James W. Grimes) was born in Columbus where she now lives. She is the mother of five children, the president of the Ohio Folklore Society, and the owner of the outstanding collection of dulcimers in this country. Her second album of folk music, MIDWEST FOLKSONGS, will be released this spring by Riverside Recording Corp.*



*Mae Shaffer Photo*